

LACDMH HOSTS 9th ANNUAL CONNECTIONS FOR LIFE
By Karen Zarsadiaz-Ige, LACDMH Public Information Officer



Photo by MC Harris

On Thursday, April 23, 2015, the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health (LACDMH) hosted its 9th annual Connections for Life conference at the California Endowment in downtown Los Angeles. The yearly conference encourages and supports consumers who have achieved their employment, education and/or volunteer goals. More than 250 people attended the event.



The morning started with the Changing Spirits Drum Circle and a welcome address from LACDMH Director Marvin Southard, DSW and Event Chair Victoria Sofro from the Mental Health Commission. Dr. Southard inspired the audience, sharing stories about overcoming challenges and obstacles. "This event is about you, your success and your future. This is one of my favorite events all year," he said.



This year's facilitator, Denise Bissonette, then introduced herself and gave a summary of what to expect for the day. Bissonette got the crowd prepared for the day by reciting her favorite poem.



Photo by MC Harris

Throughout the day, attendees listened to consumer stories and went to workshops, designed especially for them. Makeovers were also done on three participants: Patricia Dawson, LaTricia Greer and Janet Wright.

At the close of the conference, LACDMH Chief Deputy Director Robin Kay, PhD recognized this year's outstanding consumers and presented the Distinguished Consumer Award to Roy Molina. The other nominees included Sonja Ulrich, Felix Garcia, Andreterri Greer, Stefanie Okumura, William Patterson, Randall Smith, Gabriela

Villegas (not in attendance), Sedrick Speed (not in attendance), Zulma Martinez (not in attendance) and Gerald Stowers (not in attendance).

